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describe in this article, is actually adjoining the small stream called *Fuaran*,\* which purls away on the east side of it; and there is also a little to the south of the church, a holy well, neatly faced with stone embankments of a quadrilateral form, and shaded with thorns, well hung with torn scraps of calico dedicated to the tutelary saint.

There is yet to be seen in the middle of the churchyard of Seir-Kyran, a very ancient freestone slab, having a cross and a few Irish letters visible upon it. From the letters legible, (only a few being so,) I am induced to suppose it the tomb of Caomb† Oran, or gentle Oran, who, as he was abbot of Aghaboe, and died in 1066, was probably Bishop of Ossory, and having removed from Saiger, in 1052, at the transfer of the see, his corpse was, in all likelihood, interred in the latter place.

By far the most curious thing at Seir-Kyran's is the round tower, and to which I have never seen a similar one. It is only about twenty feet high, with a conical stone roof, and was evidently erected subsequent to the fabric that once stood beside it, and against the south-east angle of which it was built. It contains a great many loopholes around it. These are three or four inches square on the outside, but are levelled off so as to adjoin each other on the inside. Some of the holes are not on a level with the others. I suppose this tower to have been used for keeping up a consecrated fire in it.—These religious fires were by no means so rare as some suppose. This is not a convenient place for entering upon a dry and lengthened treatise respecting them. The general class of readers of the Dublin Penny Journal would probably spurn such food. Suffice it, therefore, to remark, that the Druids kept fires ignited as emblems of the sun or life. In Toland's History we find that "on a certain evening all the people of the country, out of religious persuasion instilled into them by the Druids, extinguished their fires entirely: that every master of a family was obliged to take a portion of the consecrated fire home, and to kindle the fire anew in his house, which, for the ensuing year was to be lucky and prosperous. He was to pay, however—" Macgeoghagan, Tom. 1, p. 81, writes there was an annual Druidical fire lighted at *Ilachta*,‡ in the barony of Clonlisk, and King's County. The same historian says, that this was an institution of the monarch Tuathal-Teachmar, and that the place it was held in had been cut off Munster by the same king. He adds that it was forbidden to supply fires with fuel on November eve until they were first renewed from that holy fire.—We are informed by early writers that this practice was continued after the introduction of Christianity. We are told that St. Patrick had his consecrated fire, and St. Brigid had at Kildare her perpetual fire. Ware§ informs us that Henry de Loundres, Archbishop of Dublin, put out St. Brigid's fire, because the custom was not used elsewhere. It is strange how so learned and laborious a writer as Sir James Ware could have fallen into so great a mistake. In a paper of Mr. Cooke's, of Birr, giving an account of the Barnari-Cuilawn, (a curious ancient fire-cover in that gentleman's possession,) published in the transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, as read before that learned body the 7th of January, 1822, he shows that relic to have been the cover of a perpetual fire, instituted in the parish of Glankeen, county of Tipperary, by St. Cuilawn, brother to Cormac McCullenan, who was King and Bishop of Cashel upwards of nine hundred years ago. In like manner St. Kyran had his consecrated fire at Saiger, in imitation of the Druidical one at *Ilachta*, which was but a short distance from his monastery. Colgan relates,|| "St. Kyran, the Bishop, resolved that the fire consecrated at Easter should not be extinguished in his monastery for the whole year."—The same authority informs us that "a boy named Chichideus, of Cluain, who belonged to the monastery of Clonmacnoise, having spent some days with St. Kyran at

the monastery of Saiger, extinguished the fire, and was killed by wolves as a judgment from heaven; which when his master, St. Kyran, the younger, Abbot of Clonmacnoise, learned, he went to Saiger, to St. Kyran, senior, and was received with great honour, but that there was not then any fire in the monastery, because the fires all through the place used daily to be kindled from the consecrated fire." This story, divested of what relates to the wolves, plainly shows that there was formerly a sacred fire kept up here; and it is most likely the tower I have described was used as the fire-house. Such is at least my opinion, which I offer for the correction of those more learned in these matters.

There is a beautiful demesne called Oakley in this parish. It belongs to George Stoney, Esq., who has expended large sums of money adorning with all the diversities of water and landscape his mansion here, and in doing that which, in a public point of view, is still more creditable, namely, giving employment to the labouring classes. In a fort in this demesne was found, a few years ago, the haft of a pen-knife, of brass, having upon it, in Roman characters, "Success to the King of Prussia—I say for ever, huzza." It was probably brought here by some of the Germans in the year 1798. It is now in the collection of Mr. Cooke, of Parsonstown.



The Roman Catholic chapel in this parish is a tolerable edifice, and the present parish church is not only a plain, but damp and uncomfortable old building. The only thing remarkable about it is its having, projecting from the western gable end, an ancient freestone bust of St. Kyran, which, probably, ornamented the more ancient fabric. The eastern gable is ornamented with an old freestone window-frame, at some distance from which there also projects from the wall a grotesque figure, in freestone, about a foot and a half long, and not unlike, in figure, to a small porcelain Greek idol, in possession of the writer of this account. The above engraving is a representation of it. B.

#### KENNY KILFOY—OR MURDER WILL OUT.

It is a custom in several parts of Ireland for the young men of one village to join and perform certain descriptions of work for each other in conjunction. For instance, from a dozen to fifteen young men will assemble, with their spades and *facks*,\* and completely sow all the potatoes for one family before they stop. They will then proceed to another farm and perform the same task, and so on until all the potatoes belonging to the confederacy are planted. Turf-cutting and reaping are usually performed in this manner. This is generally considered a very good method of performing labour, as it ensures expedition and promotes good feeling in the neighbourhood among the young, besides rendering them better workmen, as there usually exists an emulative pride among them for the best and cleanest work, and the leadership of the field. These meetings are always scenes of feasting and pleasantries; besides, as the farmer considering his work done without an outlay in money, is anxious to give his friends and neighbours the best enter-

\* *Fuaran*, a spring. † Gentle—mild.

‡ *Ilachta* appears to be situate about Brusna, in Sir Robert Vaugondy's map of Ireland in 1757.

§ Antiq. c. 17. § 6.

|| De vita S. Kieran, c. 35, p. 462.

\* Narrow spades with but one foot-rest.

tainment. The rude jest, ever bringing the ready and boisterous laugh, and the loud song are heard over the field the live-long day.

In the beginning of the summer of 1796, a parcel of young men assembled early in the morning on a certain portion of the bog of Allen, adjoining the King's county, to cut the turf of a young farmer named Buckley. They amounted in number to about fifteen, all fine well-limbed and healthy young men, with their *slanes*\* and wheel-barrows, ready to cut with sinewy arms the black soft soil. The morning was extremely fine, and the young men worked with spirit and activity until about one o'clock in the afternoon, when Buckley's sister and a servant girl were seen approaching the bog, loaded with "the dinner" for the men, and followed by a *gossoon*, carrying two large vessels of milk. The young men ceased working as they approached, and arranged themselves on the heath-covered bank. Among the young men working for her brother, the handsome Essy Buckley had two admirers, who eagerly contended with each other for the honour of her hand at the dance, at fair, or pattern, and who wooed her smiles with the most constant assiduity. She, of course, felt her heart inclined to one, much to the mortification and jealousy of the other. They were both young men, and lived in the same village; their farms were nearly equal in profit, and subject to the same rent; and both, with regard to worldly substance, were nearly equal; that is, both were comfortable in the sense which an Irish peasant understands the thing. Both had a cow giving milk, a few sheep, poultry and pigs; their corn and potatoes were regularly sowed, and their rent punctually called for by the agent, and generally forthcoming. But still they were not equal in the eye of Essy Buckley. Her favourite, Tom Molloy, in her mind was infinitely superior to his rival, Kenny Kilfoy, for the equality which I have observed between them in *other* things, did not go with Essy as a criterion of their merits *otherwise*. She loved Tom Molloy. He was a dark-eyed, ruddy-faced, black haired, pleasant young fellow; ever with a smile on his lips, and pleasantry in his look; always the lightest foot in the dance and the merriest at labour. His rival had the advantage of him in stature, but was not so compactly made or handsomely formed, with light hair and a sallow, colorless face; his disposition too was sombre; and he was generally taciturn and reserved. For his own sake he always joined the co-operative labourers; and though, as his neighbours expressed it, there was ever "the *coatha cowl*† about his mouth, and the complaint of one thing or another on his tongue, and though he was always penurious and *gurtherth* in doing a decent thing, yet he never thrived better than another. Such were the lovers of Essy Buckley; and we cannot blame her in her choice of a sweet-heart; for what young girl would prefer a silent, melancholy lover, without spirit or sprightliness, like Kenny Kilfoy, to a good-humoured, good-hearted, and pleasant handsome young fellow, like Tom Molloy.

The bacon and cabbage was served round on the white wooden platters, then so commonly in use, by Jack Buckley, the elder brother of Essy; and the thick milk poured out into the equally white wooden noggins—still the vessel generally used among our peasantry—and the scene was one of happiness and peace. "Rustic labour, toil embrowned." A group of smiling faces, seated on a

high bank richly covered with yellow moss, purple heather, and the long green branches of the "bog-sallow."

"Come, move over there, Kenny," said Tom, who was sitting next his rival, "an' make room for Essy to sit beside me."

"Do you want to shove me into the hole?" grumbled the stirlless Kenny.

"Don't stir, Kenny," interrupted the lively Essy. "I'll just sit down here furninst you 'till I see which o' youz can eat the purtiest."

"Och, thin, iv that's the case," said Tom, "I must turn my back to you."

"Why so, Tom?" asked Essy; "I thought you'd give up in nothin' to him."

Kenny smiled grimly, whether through satisfaction or otherwise none could interpret.

"And do you give it up, Tom?" said Jack Buckley, placing another slice of the bacon upon his platter.

"Oh, faix," said Tom, "he has the best tools; see what a fine sharp set ov teeth he has, and a beautiful big mouth; the sorra purthier eather or cleaverer thrincher-man on the bog ov Allen this day than you are, Kinny Kilfoy," he added, addressing himself to his rival, with good-humoured comicality.

"Well, sorra take you, Tom," said another, "but the dickens can't bate you at jibing."

"Och, I don't mind what *cracked people* sez," grinned Kenny bitterly.

"An' you're right, Kenny," said Essy, mischievously; "an' the never a betterer he is with his romashes—never lets a sober body alone."

"Oh, thin, never heed him you, Essy," smilingly answered Tom, for he saw the choler of his rival rising, and he wished to provoke him or draw him out; "never heed him—he's vexed enough 'ithout you goin' to vex him more with your sly jokes."

"It's not the likes o' you that could vex me at any rate," muttered Kenny, getting more vexed at having his testy humour taken notice of before all his compeers, and her before whom he wished to appear particularly amiable; "It's not you that could vex me," he added, "barin' you were saucy or impident, and forced me to make you know which was the betterer man."

This hint was too much for even Tom's good humour, especially when given before Essy; and the boys, who felt it in its proper sense, looked to see how such an intimation would be taken. Tom's eyes kindled with a brighter light as he replied, still in his good-humoured way,

"Bar there, Kenny," said he, "I acknowledge that you are an oulder man than me, and that you were a man when I was a *gossoon*; but I will never say, that now we are both men, that you were ever a taste a betterer man, or as good. With regard to what you said afore, about *cracked people*, all I have to say is, that thank God I'm not a moping *omedham*, like some body that I could spit upon."

"You may thank that I wouldn't like to spoil the day's work on Jack Buckley," said Kenny; "and that the dacent girl that I have a regard for is to the fore, or I'd soon let you know the differ."

"It's easy settlin' that," said Tom; "I'll wrastle you this evening, when the dacent girl that you have a regard for, (mimicking Kenny's drawling tone), an' that cares little about you, I'm thinking, won't be present, and let the best two out of three show who's the man that has a right to brag."

"Aye, that's the fair way," interposed some of the men, who saw a quarrel likely to ensue, and wished to prevent it, by what they considered a harmless trial of strength and dexterity.

The men resumed their work with increased good humour and renovated glee, all except Kenny Kilfoy, who nursed his angry feelings and passions in silence within his own bosom. Their work was soon done, and many a dry or elevated patch in that quarter showed black, being thickly covered with the square sods cut from the deep hole which they left behind them. The sun was not set; it was yet early evening as they left the bog.

"Well, boys," began Tom Molloy, "many hands makes

\* Any person acquainted with country work must know what a *slane* for cutting turf is. For the reader who has not had an opportunity of seeing it, we subjoin a short description:

Suppose a garden-spade diminished in breadth to one-half, but much lighter and thinner, with a longer and a lighter handle; then suppose a piece of the same breadth attached at right angles, and on the right side to it, coming from the lower or digging edge about half way up the iron, but sharp at the outer edge, and sloping to a blunt point. This kind of an instrument is used for cutting the soft, compact super strata off the bog into the square form in which it is afterwards dried and burned.

† Words expressive of that draw which a miserable and poor spirit is supposed to give to the expression of the mouth.

‡ Niggardly.

the work light; we're done brave and early, and it's as purty a day's work as you need look on."

"We'll have full time," said one, "to thry the three falls here above in the meadow, and be home afther afore the supper time."

"Auch," said another, "sure it's only jokin' Kenny was."

"How's that?" said another; "sure not maning that it's afraid he is you'd be."

"I never joke 'ithout laughin', boys," said Kilfoy, "an' I'm not in the grinnin' humour much at this present minute."

As soon as they reached the meadow, Tom, who was jogging on before Kenny with another group, tossed off his coat, and addressing Kilfoy, who was crossing the stile—

"Now, Kenny," said he, "let there never be a boast about the best man afther this bout, an' we needn't be the worse friends afther. Come, Pether, lend us your jacket, and throw my *thrifty* here over your shoullders."

He was soon arrayed in the frieze jacket, and kicking off his weighty brogues, he stood in his stocking vamps inside the little circle formed by his companions. He was joined by his rival, whose dark and lowering brow still plainly told of ire unquenched, and passion fierce and burning; and as they stood before each other, Tom stretched forth his hand in a frank and manly manner.

"Come, Kenny," said he, "give us the fist before we begin, to show there's neither spite or anger in regard o' the few words."

"Let every madman and fool shake his own hand," said Kilfoy bitterly, withholding his hand, and looking on the extended one of his rival with a sneer.

"Well, the sorra may care for your good or bad humour," replied Tom, moving towards his opponent, "come on, an' every man do his best."

They grappled, and after a few preliminary movements, the contest became interesting to all parties.

Perhaps there is no exercise so animating and healthy as wrestling, as it is practised in most parts of Ireland, and at the same time so beneficial and conducive to health when conducted fairly. All the agility and strength of the frame are put into requisition; every muscle in the body is strung, and the steadiness of foot—the quickness of eye and limb, and the pliancy necessary to excel, give vigour and elasticity in a surprising degree.

Kilfoy was the strongest man, but he evidently did not possess the action or dexterity of Molloy, who exhibited at every turn that wavy motion of the body, so observable in the tiger and leopard kind, and which gives the plainest indication of strength and agility combined, and which shows the body more like a moving mass of muscle than a composition of flesh and bone. Often did Kenny attempt to toss his opponent, and as often was he foiled by the superior tact and quickness of his adversary, and the spectators, by their looks, gestures, and exclamations, gave vent to their feelings or their admiration.

"By my conscience that was a mighty purty offer of Tom's to draw him off."

"Faix he was near getting the *sleeshoge* on him that time."

"Look at the hump Kenny has on his shoullders, watching like a badger in a barrel."

"Faix Tom has as purty a stan' as ever I saw with a boy; as straight an' as light as Sharpfoot the dancin'-master."

"Bow!—he was near bringing Tom with that strong *cross-thrip*," said one amateur, starting from a recumbent posture to one knee, as his favourite stumbled from a sudden forcible manœuvre of his opponent.

"A hangnashun ugly thrip that *cross-thrip* is" remarked another.

"Ha! he's at it agin—not so well as before though," said another.

"Look at Tom how he smiles; watch his eye; he's throwin' himself in the way ov that ugly curl agin," said a young one.

"Never!" said another in a lower voice; "iv he thries that *cross-thrip* agin, he's done as sure as his name's Kenny Kilfoy."

Kenny did try the *cross-thrip* again, and as quick as thought his rival drew back; his foot missed the object, and, in endeavouring to recover his position, his foot was caught, and Kenny Kilfoy measured his length in the green grass. A loud hurroo declared the triumph ov the victor. Kenny rose from the ground more furious than before. He was more enraged than ever, for shame added to his anger. He was certain of victory, and disappointment lent three-fold stings to his former ranking. His friends came round him:

"I was thinking," said one, "that *cross-thrip* id disappoint you."

"You should have got in on him," said another.

"Close him, Kenny," said a third, "when you go in again; he's too active for you, and you'll have a better chance, for you're the strongest."

"Standhers-by are always good wrastlers," said Kenny churlishly, shaking off his Job-like advisers, and walking forth again to meet his antagonist. They grappled again; Kenny went more incautiously to work than before. He thripped furiously, and swung his lighter antagonist about in rather an awkward way. Molloy went from side to side with him as he pulled, and escaped his efforts to throw him, until his own violent exertions pretty well fatigued him; he then commenced annoying, and with a well managed feint he drew his comrade off his guard, and tossed up his heels in a most dexterous manner.

"You're the best man be odds, Tom," said Jack Buckley, "an' Kenny must acknowledge that himself for a good thruth; but he won't refuse to shake hands I know now, as I won't be easy 'till I see you friends agin."

"Never!" muttered Kenny, with furious emphasis from between his set teeth, and he turned from the group.

"When I offered him my hand," said Tom, "before we began, I did it like a man; now I wouldn't give him my hand for all he's worth in the world."

Kenny stalked away completely crest fallen, yet with a refreshed and a new burning hate in his bosom. He felt that Tom was beloved by Essy; and he thought that harmless jest which Tom uttered in the bog was with a design to render him ridiculous before his mistress. He retorted in a way in which he imagined himself sure of drawing his rival into disgrace, and in this too he was foiled. Thus jealousy and shame were heaped upon him, and worked within his moody soul. Yet another trial awaited him, in which he suffered more, but which brought on the most tragic results.

Not far from the village there was a wake on this very night. An old woman, the mother of a neighbouring farmer, and a distant relation of Kilfoy's had "departed" that morning. He would have avoided going, for he knew that the Bucklys and Molloy, and all the witnesses of his defeat would be assembled there, and that the story would be told to many, and that he would be the subject of all tongues, and the marked of every eye. Yet she was his own blood relation that was waking, and would he stay away when strangers would be there; besides, his absence would be marked, and attributed to a *fear* of his rival; and this thought at least he could not bear. His supper was taken in silence, and in a short time after he set out for the wake. He went by the most unfrequented bye-paths, and reached the house just as the darkness was closing around.

To many an Irish wake is a familiar sight; to many more a short description of it, such as it is, in its full costume, as seen in almost every part of Ireland, may not be unacceptable, and we will take this one as for all.—Nearly opposite the door the corpse of the old woman was extended on a large table, which being too short, another smaller was placed at the end, and supported by sods of turf to bring both on a level. Under the head was placed a *phangle*, or sheaf of straw, but smoothly covered over with a white sheet. The corpse was also covered with white sheets, and on the breast was laid a platter with snuff, which was taken off and handed round the house occasionally. Below the snuff-plate was a bundle of new pipes, half filled with cut tobacco, shook into them rather loosely that it might serve the more. Then a large canopy was formed over the body, with white sheets also, from which others depended, covering the

wall, and protecting the corpse from view at head and foot, but leaving it entirely visible in front. Two painted prints were hung over the head; one representing "the nativity," and the other "the crucifixion," while opposite, against the wall, was fastened a large cross, made of two stripes of black velvet placed crosswise.—Then here and there within the alcove was pinned up large bunches of flowers. Such, I believe, is the usual method of "laying out a corpse" in the country places nearly through Ireland. All the stools, forms, &c. in the neighbourhood were borrowed, and the house was thronged with the young and old of both sexes, laughing, chatting, and smoking quite at their ease; but the women invariably decked out in their best muslins and calicoes.

As Kilfoy entered he took off his hat, and kneeling down within side the threshold, he crossed himself, and repeated a few prayers within his breath, and then rose up, without looking at any person, and threw himself carelessly into a seat, and pulled his hat down low upon his brow.

"Ah then, Kenny Kilfoy, but it's gettin' mighty polite and genteel you are," said the light tones of a loved and familiar voice at his side, which made his heart-strings thrill, "an' you sit down without sayin' be your leave, or lookin' at who's beside you."

It was Essy Buckley. She saw him sunk and cast down—she knew all that past—and with that quick perception, so marked in woman, felt that he was suffering, and that she was the occasion of it; and she thought she had a right to speak cheerfully to him.

"An' is it you, Essy, *avourneen*," said he, "an' are you here alone; an', sure, I didn't see you, or, the Lord forgive me, it's not o' my prayers I'd be thinkin'."

"Oh, yes, Kenny, talk that way av you like," she replied, "but sure it's I that well knows whose nearest your heart. Did I see you the other Sunday whisperin' with Kitty Kinshela, ov the big house, when mass was over? Faix I did; an' a purty *cugger* you had ov id, Kenny, an' a nice purty girl she is, an' dhressed like a lady; it's you that has the dacent notion, an' no blame to you."

Kenny's captious and suspicious temper trembled even under this simple reply. He thought that there was something of irony mingled with the latter part of it; and his already sore heart felt pained by Essy's harmless remarks.

"You may joke, Essy," he answered, "an' you may laugh, iv you like, at me; but iv you knew me—iv you knew my heart—iv you knew all—I won't say my misery, you wouldn't laugh at me."

"Indeed, Kenny," replied the unthinking girl, struck by his tone and manner, "I wouldn't laugh at you; sure I know you since I was a child, an' you're an honest father's an' mother's child; an' I wouldn't laugh at you; but, indeed, I thought you an' Kitty were *hand-bound*\* at least." She added the latter remark in the hope that if it was not the case, that it might serve as a hint to Kenny on more accounts than one.

"I suppose you don't know that Kitty is my cousin, then," said Kilfoy, "an' that 'id be beyant the rules to think ov her in the way of marriage; besides you ought to know that it's a long time since I first told you how my love was fixed; an' you know I'm not one of your hair-brained kind of people, that has a fair word for every body, an' a laugh an' a soft word for every girl that I meet."

"I know you to be a solid steady boy," replied Essy, evidently at a loss to get rid of a discourse that was growing painful; "but I never thought of any thing in the way of mathrimony, nor never will until—"

Here she was interrupted by the village *momus*, who had assumed, for the merriment of the company, the character of the parish priest, and was about uniting several candidates for the Hymeneal state, *volens volens*; that he might, as he said, "begin the divarshin ov the night."

"Come," said he, "none of your whisperin' behind backs, but come 'till I tie the knot for yous at 'onst."

This was the noted Jack Mulryan, the laughing philosopher of the village. He ever set care at defiance—enjoyed his fun whenever he could make or meet with it—was the master of the ceremonies at every wake in the country—and was the constant leader in every merriment. Jack, with the tail of his great coat pinned about his neck, and a straw hat on his head, tied the young couples as quick as they pleased; and he now summoned Essy and Kenny to have the yoke imposed upon them. Essy refused with much steadiness and reserve, to undergo even the mock ceremony with Kenny, while he, feeling an unusual pleasure at the kindness which he imagined Essy had shown him that evening, pressed her to comply with the humour of Jack, and with the custom to which all usually conform.

She refused; and all the entreaties of Kenny, and the jibes and jests of the mock clergyman could not prevail upon her.

"Come, Essy," said Kilfoy, "you know it can do you no harm; and see all the girls and boys are quite pleasant; do let Jack buckle us, an' don't be after makin' yourself odd, lest the people say you're gettin' proud."

"No, no," said Essy, "I cannot do it—I will not do it. It is useless for you to tease me, Mr. Mulryan; and you, Kenny Kilfoy, I am sure it doesn't become you to torment me this way, so it doesn't."

"Mr. Mulryan," said Jack in his bantering strain; "ha, ha—sure it's myself that's growin' the great man. Iv one ov you's calls me 'Jack to-night any more, after Miss Essy callin' me Mither, pershumin' to me but I'll clap you's into the stocks. But," he added, turning to Kenny, "let the *colleen* alone; you're not the boy, *avick*, that's for her hand, joke or in earnest. Tom Molloy's the bit ov stuff in fair or market that hits Essy's fancy."

This pointed allusion to his rival, and the persevering coldness of Essy, together with the fresh rushing memory of his shame, contributed to rouse all the bad passions of his heart anew. Turning upon Jack, his sallow face working in varied contortions, and his small, deep sunken eyes flashing with the fire of inflamed rage, he seized him by the collar.

"You fool—you laughin', rhymin', pennyless *omedhaun*," said he, "how dare you mention Molloy to me?" and he glared and grinned at the still laughing Jack. "But you are a pair ov fools—ger along with you," added he, shaking Mulryan from him.

At the beginning of the above sentence Tom Molloy just entered the wake. Essy was in tears, and he took her hand and placed her quietly, without saying a word, beside an old woman, then turning full to Kenny, who in the madness of his passion had not before observed him,

"You white-livered *budogh*,"\* said he with much excitation, "isn't it a shame for you to be kicking up such ructions in the honest woman's decent wake, and she your own flesh and blood: an' if you had the spark of a man 'ithin in you it's not makin' a wake woman cry, an' callin' a man names behind his back that you daren't before his face."

This was all that was wanting to excite his smouldering passion into full blaze. He made no reply; his face assumed an ashy paleness, the colour fled from his lips, and he rushed to grasp Tom with concentrated fierceness; but Tom, with the eye of the lynx, rushed to meet him, and merely pushing him backward over a long low form, he fell headlong against the table upon which the dead body of his relative was laid. The table, which was rather crazy before, unable to stand such a shock from such a weighty body, broke down, and with a crash covered the unfortunate Kenny Kilfoy with corpse, sheets, and all. The wreck was tremendous: the candles were tumbled about the floor, and put out—the snuff was scattered like a cloud, setting all within its reach into violent sneezing fits; and the heaps of new pipes were smashed into useless fragments. Then the shrieking of the old women, and the darkness were truly frightful. On light being procured, and silence and order somehow restored, Kenny Kilfoy was released from the ruin, and the corpse and parapher-

\* This is a common ceremony among the young people in Ireland, and it is considered even *more binding* than an oath.

\* Churl.

malia in some measure restored to its former appearance. The people rose up to prevent a recurrence of the quarrel, which, however, neither party seemed inclined to renew. Peace was in some measure restored, but there was a strange silence ensued, made doubly remarkable by the previous bustle and noise. Kenny stood with his face turned away from the people, and looking at the corpse. A superstitious feeling had taken possession of his mind; and a kind of horror, mixed with something still more terrible, was expressed in his dark contracted brow and fixed mouth. No person attempted to break the silence. The falling of a corpse was looked on as an unlucky omen, though of what, or to whom, no one could divine; and undefined fear and vague apprehension have ever a mysterious power on the mind. At length an old woman who was seated nearly opposite to where Kilfoy was standing, and who was puffing with might and main from the stump of one of the broken pipes, into which she had crammed the contents of about half a dozen other demolished heads, drawing the pipe from her mouth, and puffing aside the blue smoke, addressed Kenny.

"You ought to pray to heaven," she said, solemnly and emphatically, "to turn aside any ill luck that's over you—an' it's greatly afraid I am that there's a *crass* afore you, and that thrubble and thribilation 'ill be your lot afore long."

"Keep your *pishergues* an' your foretellin's till your axed for them," said he with a scowl, and pulling down his hat he walked out, without looking to the right or to the left, and without opening his lips.

He did not go home; but when he got to a distance from any house, and afar from the sounds of human voices, in a lone field, through which, however, there was a short cut to the village, he threw himself at the foot of a clump of black-thorn and furze mingled, and gave way to every gloomy anticipation and reflection that crossed his mind. The events of that day passed in rapid review before him. The satire and the jest in which Essy and Tom, and her brother joined on the bog—the wrestling match, and the circumstances of the wake. Was he now to be the laughing-stock, and the standing jest-mark of the country side? And then the gloomy apprehensions of fear and superstition about the overturned corpse filled his mind. His heart was a prey to the most conflicting passions. He wished himself dead at one time, and at another he vowed bitter vengeance on the object of his jealous hate. Time passed over quickly, and he recked not nor heeded, until at length the sounds of approaching footsteps, and the light sound of voices reached his ear. He listened, and as if pursued by his evil genii, he distinguished the accents of Tom Molloy and Essy, and her brother. They were returning from the wake, and as they drew near he could distinctly hear that he was the subject of their laughter and conversation.

"An' did you mind," said Tom, as they approached where he was, "did you mind when they dragged him out from under the corpse how white he was, an' how he panted, an' how his face twisted. You could swear he was the picther of the dead ould woman."

"Ha, ha, ha," laughed Essy at the comparison, "an' sure there's nothin' s'trange in that, when you know they're near relations."

"Sure enough," said the brother, "you must have given him the father ov a douce to dhrive him that way."

"Psha-at, no," said Tom in a light tone, "just a little push—thro'th it wouldn't take much to do it, seein' that he's so wake as—"

The rest of the sentence was lost to Kilfoy, but what he heard was sufficient to drive him mad.

The more he thought, the more his dark fancy and imagination wrought his brain to phrenzy, and he started to his feet, and rushed along by another route towards his own house. Revenge was now the overwhelming and master passion in his soul, and a dark and dreadful revenge he determined to wreak.

His cabin lay nearly in a direct line between that of the Bucklys and the cottage of Molloy. He reached it without encountering any person. He rushed in and seized the *slane*, with which he had that day been at work, and, hiding it beneath his great coat, he traversed

the fields with rapid steps, until he hid himself in the shadow of a large ash tree, in a ditch beside the path where he knew his rival must pass upon his return from Buckley's to his own house.

Tom did not remain long with Essy and her brother; he bid them good night, and turned to his own home, and commenced whistling, "speed the plough" in merry thoughtlessness. He never spent a thought upon his quarrel with Kilfoy—his heart was full of joy and love.—Essy had that night promised to be his; and her brother, by his friendly manner, seemed to countenance his addresses to his sister. They could afford, he knew, to give her some trifle that might help them exceedingly beginning the world, and though this was but a secondary consideration to him, still that, and the consciousness of being loved by her besides, rendered his waking dream of anticipated happiness doubly pleasant. With a heart glowing with all these joyous emotions, he entered upon the pathway where his enemy stood, like the tiger waiting by the stream side for the thirsty antelope. On he came, with his blithe whistle, startling the sleeping birds in the boughs above his head, which flitted with a short chirrup, and a whirring flutter, from one branch to another, as he passed beneath. He passed by the ash tree. Kilfoy leaped out, and aimed a dreadful blow at the back of his head. The sudden noise made him jump a little aside, and he received the stroke full on the side of his head, but with the flat part of the *slane*. He fell, and was in the act of gaining his feet again, when Kilfoy repeated the blow with all his might. He raised his arm to defend his head, but the guard was but feeble when compared to the force of the blow, and the weight of the weapon, and he again fell at his length on the path. Still he was not materially injured, but he felt how it would end, and looked up to the demoniac fury which flashed in Kilfoy's eyes, and his heart and stomach grew sick, either with apprehension or from the blows, and he cried out,

"Oh, Kenny Kilfoy, are you going to murder me?"

"Ha!" cried the infuriated wretch, "now do you mock me—now who's the best man? Now tell Essy Buckley that I'm a cowardly, weak, mopin' fool. Now—" and another blow left the unfortunate Molloy silent for ever. The cocked part of the *slane* had penetrated the scull to the depth of several inches, and, as he drew up the weapon, the head of the good-hearted young man clung to it, until the weight of the body detached it. A short, gurgling, choking cry was all that was uttered, and a quivering of the limbs succeeded, and all was still and motionless. This deed was but the work of a few minutes. There stood the murderer and his victim; and, already, the consequences of his crime was felt in his heart, as he gazed at his rival weltering in his hot young blood. A rush of the breeze agitating the boughs into murmurs over his head, seemed to denounce him aloud, and the quivering moon-beams flitting to and fro over the bloody spot, as they streamed through the waving branches, seemed to his already horror-stricken fancy like a thousand dancing lights, flung by unseen hands, to show to the world the cursed deed. He grasped his stiffening hair on each side of his brow with both his hands, and he seemed as if willing to tear the covering from his burning brain, that the chill night breeze might coolly fan it, so tight and hard did he gripe it.

"Now," said he, as the remembrance of the old woman's words rushed into his mind, "now the bad luck is on me. Now the thrubble and the thribilation is my lot for ever," and he gazed fearfully round him, and rushed from the spot.

Early next morning the body of the murdered Molloy was discovered, cold and lifeless, and the *slane* of Kenny Kilfoy lying beside it. The suspicions of all fell directly on him, and the country was traversed in all directions, but the slightest trace of the murderer could not be discovered. He had not slept at home that night, nor had he been seen by any person from the moment he left the wake. An inquest was held on the body. The quarrels were stated, and the identity of the *slane* sworn to; and the jury, without hesitation, pronounced a verdict of "wilful murder against Kenny Kilfoy." It is useless here to describe the anguish of Essy Buckley, the grief of



Tom's little *bocagh*, (brother,) and the sorrow of the whole neighbourhood; for Tom's good-natured and pleasant disposition had endeared him to every one. He was waked according to the usual form, and there never was so numerously attended a wake, or so respectable a funeral seen in the village. As Tom had but one relative, the little cripple abovementioned, who was unable to manage the farm, it was accordingly sold, with all the little live stock and furniture, and with the sum procured the cripple commenced business as a pedlar. He was a cunning, saving, industrious little fellow, who soon improved, and in the course of a few years, his means enabled him to purchase a nag and cart, and to lay in a stock of goods, with which he traversed the country in all directions, and in time became a very wealthy man.

Years rolled away, and still there never was a word heard about Kenny Kilfoy; and the deed and his name were nearly forgotten even in the village. Aby, Tom's brother, but seldom came near his native place. Once or twice a year would he be seen at the spot where his brother was murdered; but regularly, on the morning of the anniversary of the murder, would the villagers behold him, from dawn to sunrise, kneeling on the spot, and, with his long beads depending from his fingers, in the attitude of prayer.

Nearly twenty years passed over in this manner, and still no tidings of Kilfoy could be procured, and it was supposed that he had made his escape to America. Aby Molloy traversed Ireland with his horse and cart, and about the summer of 1813 he attended the fair of Ballinasloe, where, having a great variety of goods for sale, he pleased the country people so well, that he got most of them off his hands at large profits. He then formed the resolution of going down farther into the more distant and remote parts of the province, in hopes to sell out his stock before his return to Dublin for new goods. He passed on from town to town and from village to village, and in the course of some weeks reached the secluded district in the county of Mayo in which is situated the little town of Crossmolina. It was late in the evening when he arrived, and he sought his humble inn for the night. Strange dreams came over him during the night. He thought at one time that he was at the spot where his brother was murdered, and that the earth around was covered with fresh gore. At another he dreamed that his brother came to him, as he beheld him the morning after his death, covered with his own cold and blackened blood, and smiling in his face, the ghastly smile which might be supposed such a hideous face could give, took him by the hand and bid him arise. The terrifying sight would cause him to awake with affright; yet as soon as slumber again visited his wearied frame, the same appalling vision would crowd upon his dreaming fancy. He lay in bed that morning longer than he was wont; his mind was unusually affected, and a gloom was cast over it, which he in vain endeavoured to shake off. On his rising he went to the door to see what appearance the little town had. He looked up and down the street. He looked at the door opposite, for he felt as one feels who has the eye of a stranger fixed on him—(there is a kind of

sympathy excited by the electricity of certain looks)—and what was his horror to behold the identical Kenny Kilfoy, almost unchanged by time, gazing on him with an intense and alarmed gaze. He trembled as he recognised the murderer of his brother. He opened his lips to speak—his tongue was tied in wonder—he hobbled a few steps into the street and extended his arms, but could not utter a word. The murderer disappeared from the door, and he immediately recovered from his surprise, and seeing some military men lounging about a little barracks in the town, he hobbled up, and in hurried accents related the facts. The serjeant of the guard attended him: they entered the house and found the now wretched Kilfoy extended in a paroxysm of fear, and remorse upon his face, on the bed, in a back room.

"There, there," he exclaimed, "there is the man that murdered my brother—take him—take him, he's the murderer."

It may be necessary here to take a retrospective view of the life of Kenny Kilfoy from the night on which he committed the bloody deed. He rushed from the scene of guilt, without noting the direction he took; he travelled at a running rate all that night, and at the break of day he was nearly twenty miles distant from the spot. He perceived some men at a distance going to field-work, and he dreaded to meet the eye of man. He left the road, and took shelter in a screen of fir-trees by the road side. Tired and fatigued though he was, he could not rest. The murdered Molloy was always before his eyes, and when the darkness fell he crept from his hiding-place, and resumed his journey; and though fasting and fatigued, the anxiety of his mind served to bear up his body against the effects of over exertion. He reached Crossmolina in safety, and his mind becoming something easier, he stopped there for some time working with a baker. He was generally abstracted in his manner, and sought active employment as a means of diverting his thoughts from the contemplation of his crime. His attention pleased his employer, and in the course of a few years he acquired a perfect knowledge of the business. His mind became gradually settled, and he felt a security and an ease growing round him. His employer had but one child, a girl, and Kilfoy having saved some money, and being of quiet, sober habits, he was induced to consent to the marriage of his daughter with Kenny. The old man died in a few years after, and at the time of his apprehension, Kilfoy was one of the most wealthy and respected men in the little town. Heaven never blessed him with children, and this he now spoke of as his greatest happiness.

He confessed the murder on being taken by the soldiers, and confronted by Aby, and was then removed to the gaol of Philipstown, where, after undergoing the regular trial the following assizes, he suffered the extreme penalty of the law, acknowledging his crime, the justice of his sentence, and dying truly repentant.

This tale has its foundation in fact, and is an example of the equity of Divine Providence, who, however long crime is allowed to go unpunished, is still sure to detect and punish the guilty.

J. L. L.

#### ANCIENT BRASS RELIC.



The above is a correct representation of a piece of brass, having a hole in one end, as if intended to be suspended by a string or chain; it is three and a half inches long, and about the tenth of an inch thick. The letters marked thereon are in alto-relievo. It was lately turned up by a plough near the castle of Clonmines, formerly a preceptory of the Knights Templers, in the county Wexford, and

presented by Mr. Sutton, who holds the farm, to Samuel Elly, Esq., of Bannow, in whose possession it now remains. The inscription will afford a subject of enquiry for some of your antiquarian correspondents.

N. B.—The F in the second line has been read by many persons as P. C. H. W.  
Wexford, 1854.